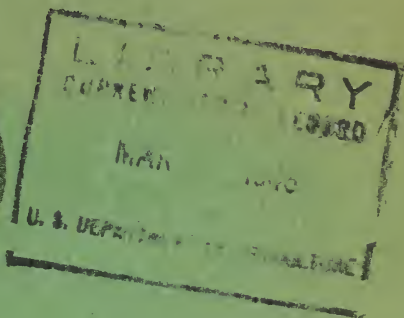


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ORGANIZATION of 4-H CLUB WORK

A Guide for Local Leaders



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ORGANIZATION OF 4-H CLUB WORK

A GUIDE FOR LOCAL LEADERS

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INTRODUCTION

4-H CLUB WORK for rural boys and girls is a part of the national agricultural extension system which reaches every State in the United States, Puerto Rico, and the Territories of Alaska and Hawaii. It is being developed also in many foreign countries. This system was organized by the United States Department of Agriculture in cooperation with the State colleges of agriculture and the county extension organizations under the provisions of the Smith-Lever Act of 1914 and other acts of Congress and of State legislatures authorizing the establishment of agricultural extension work and making appropriations for it. 4-H Clubs usually are organized and conducted under the immediate supervision of county extension agents cooperatively employed by the Department of Agriculture, the State colleges of agriculture, and county governments. Clergymen, teachers, and other professional men and women, together with outstanding farmers and homemakers, play an important part as local leaders in the development of this work which reaches almost 2 million rural young people each year.

DISTINGUISHING FEATURES OF 4-H CLUB WORK

Each 4-H Club member does a piece of work, under the supervision of the county extension agent, that will demonstrate or teach the better way in homemaking or agriculture. Problems are faced in the farm homes, the fields, the barns, the orchards, the gardens, and the various community meeting places. In fact, farm boys and girls through the 4-H Club program, which in turn is an integral part of the community or county extension program, are brought into intimate contact with the many interwoven problems of their own home and community life. Through the various worth-while 4-H Club activities involved, an effort is made to bring to each member the fine things in rural life and to develop in the young people reached those attitudes and ideals that make for upstanding manhood and womanhood. This, in turn, will make for spiritual as well as progressive rural leadership. Each member keeps a record of costs, labor, and results; explains the work to others; makes an exhibit; and writes a final report which summarizes the whole year's work and oftentimes recounts the changed attitudes experienced through the activities undertaken.

OBJECTIVES

The distinctive educational objectives¹ in 4-H Club work arise out of the specific Federal and State legal authorizations for the work and Nation-wide experience with the activity. In the Smith-Lever Act of 1914 there appears the following declaration of purpose underlying Federal aid to the Extension Service:

* * * to aid in diffusing among the people of the United States useful and practical information on subjects relating to agriculture and home economics, and to encourage the application of the same, * * *

That cooperative agricultural extension work shall consist of the giving of instruction and practical demonstrations in agriculture and home economics to persons not attending or resident in said colleges in the several communities, and imparting to such persons information on said subjects through field demonstrations, publications, and otherwise; * * *

4-H Club work is a specialized educational enterprise for rural youth. As such, it shares in the objectives common to all educational institutions and movements in its concern with the development of individual abilities and capacities for learning, intellectual and moral character, qualities of effective citizenship, and the like—all having a definite relationship to the development of the "heart H." Its distinctive educational objectives are:

1. To help rural boys and girls to develop desirable ideals and standards for farming, homemaking, community life, and citizenship, and a sense of responsibility for their attainment.

2. To afford rural boys and girls technical instruction in farming and homemaking, that they may acquire skill and understanding in these fields and a clearer vision of agriculture as a basic industry, and of homemaking as a worthy occupation.

3. To provide rural boys and girls an opportunity to "learn by doing" through conducting certain farm and home enterprises, and demonstrating to others what they have learned.

4. To teach rural boys and girls the value of research, and to develop in them a scientific attitude toward the problems of the farm and the home.

5. To train rural boys and girls in cooperative action to the end that they may increase their accomplishments and, through associated efforts, better assist in solving rural problems.

6. To develop in rural boys and girls habits of healthful living, to provide them with information and direction in the intelligent use of leisure, and to arouse in them worthy ambitions and a desire to continue to learn, in order that they may live fuller and richer lives.

7. To teach and to demonstrate to rural boys and girls methods designed to improve practices in agriculture and homemaking, to the end that farm incomes may be increased, standards of living improved, and the satisfactions of farm life enhanced (fig. 1).

THE TEN 4-H GUIDEPOSTS

In brief, to help prepare tomorrow's citizens physically, mentally, and spiritually, 4-H Club work provides opportunities for voluntary participation in programs, built on needs and interests, through which rural boys and girls are—

1. Developing talents for greater usefulness.
2. Joining with friends for work, fun, and fellowship.
3. Learning to live in a changing world.
4. Choosing a way to earn a living.
5. Producing food and fiber for home and market.

¹ ASSOCIATION OF LAND-GRANT COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES. RECOMMENDED POLICIES GOVERNING 4-H CLUB WORK. REPORT OF THE NATIONAL COMMITTEE OF THE LAND-GRANT COLLEGES AND THE UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE ON 4-H CLUB WORK, MAY 1935. 21 pp. 1935. [Mimeographed.]

6. Creating better homes for better living.
7. Conserving nature's resources for security and happiness.
8. Building health for a strong America.
9. Sharing responsibilities for community improvement.
10. Serving as citizens in maintaining world peace.

ELIGIBILITY FOR MEMBERSHIP

Any rural boy, or girl, within the age limits set by his State extension service, who is able to equip himself to carry on a demonstration of some better farming or homemaking activity, may become a member of a 4-H Club. The age limits usually are 10 and 20 years.

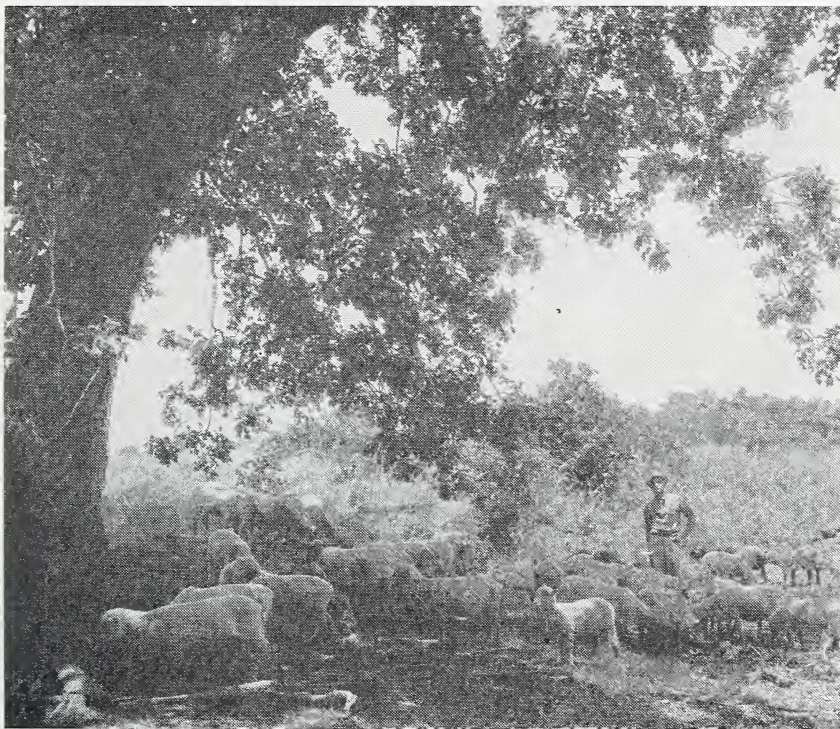


FIGURE 1.—Many satisfactions are realized through ownership.

PRICE OF MEMBERSHIP

The price of membership in 4-H Clubs is that each boy or girl shall do a piece of work that will teach the better way in homemaking or agriculture. A few 4-H Clubs have, with the unanimous consent of their members, nominal dues, but dues have no place in the national policy of 4-H Club work as a public agency.

THE NATIONAL 4-H CLUB CREED

Parallel with the development of State 4-H Club creeds, there has developed the following national 4-H Club creed:

I believe in 4-H Club work for the opportunity it will give me to become a useful citizen.

I believe in the training of my HEAD for the power it will give me to think, to plan, and to reason.

I believe in the training of my HEART for the nobleness it will give me to become kind, sympathetic, and true.

I believe in the training of my HANDS for the ability it will give me to be helpful, useful, and skillful.

I believe in the training of my HEALTH for the strength it will give me to enjoy life, to resist disease, and to work efficiently.

I believe in my country, my State, and my community, and in my responsibility for their development.

In all these things I believe, and I am willing to dedicate my efforts to their fulfillment.

THE NATIONAL 4-H CLUB PLEDGE

The national 4-H Club pledge has met a popular response throughout the United States, particularly in the development of the "heart H." At regular 4-H meetings, achievement days, and other club events, the giving of the pledge has a prominent place. In 1927, at the National 4-H Club Camp held in Washington, D. C., the State club leaders voted for the following pledge:

I Pledge	{	My Head to clearer thinking, My Heart to greater loyalty, My Hands to larger service, and My Health to better living, for My Club, my Community, and my Country.
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THE NATIONAL 4-H CITIZENSHIP PLEDGE

We, individually and collectively, pledge our efforts from day to day to fight for the ideals of this Nation.

We will never allow tyranny and injustice to become enthroned in this, our country, through indifference to our duties as citizens.

We will strive for intellectual honesty and exercise it through our power of franchise. We will obey the laws of our land and endeavor increasingly to quicken the sense of public duty among our fellow men.

We will strive for individual perfection and for social betterment. We will devote our talents to the improvement of our homes and our communities in their recreational, social, and spiritual needs.

We will endeavor to transmit this Nation to posterity not merely as we found it, but freer, happier, and more beautiful than when it was transmitted to us.

THE 4-H CLUB MOTTO

As in the case of the 4-H Club pledge, much emphasis is placed on the 4-H Club motto—To Make the Best Better, not only in the building of character and citizenship but in the raising of project standards. To Make the Best Better should be the aim of every club member and should be used as his guide in daily living.

THE 4-H CLUB SLOGANS

4-H Club slogans vary in different States. Oftentimes they are developed by the members when planning the club program for the year. Some of the most common are: Be your own best exhibit, Learn to do by doing, To beat my own best record, To win without boasting and to lose without frowning, and Plan our work and work our plan.

THE 4-H CLUB EMBLEM AND COLORS

The national 4-H Club emblem is the four-leaf clover with the letter "H" on each leaf. The national 4-H Club colors are green and white. The white background of the 4-H flag symbolizes purity; the green of the 4-H emblem represents nature's most common color in the great out-of-doors and also is emblematic of youth, life, and growth.

TYPICAL DEMONSTRATIONS

Because of the various types of agriculture in the United States, many different phases of homemaking and farm demonstration may be undertaken by 4-H Club members as an integral part of county extension programs. For example, in homemaking activities, a club member may grow a garden in keeping with the dietary needs of the family, and can the surplus garden products; plan, prepare, and serve attractive and healthful meals; make or select for herself and other members of the family, attractive, suitable clothing in keeping with the family budget; keep personal accounts; assume a share of responsibility for daily household tasks; at times, take over the management of the home when mother is on a vacation at the State college or summer camp; render more comfortable and satisfying the home itself; add to the attractiveness and beauty of the exterior of the home by planting native shrubs and trees; or help mother in the intelligent care of younger brothers and sisters.

In agricultural-club activities a member may voluntarily, under the direction of his local leader and county extension agent and in accordance with the county extension program, grow an acre or more of cotton, corn, or some other crop; raise a garden, market such fresh vegetables and fruits as may be practicable to sell, and can the surplus; raise a flock of poultry; purchase, breed, and care for a sow, and for her litter of pigs, to maturity; care for a dairy calf to maturity, and build a dairy herd; run and repair farm machinery; or conduct some other agricultural phase of work that will meet a farm or community need.

From the standpoint of the "heart H" in demonstration work much emphasis is placed on the service that may be rendered in the home and on the home farm, the assistance that may be given younger club members and others of the community, and the humane treatment that should be accorded farm animals and wildlife. At the University of Missouri, in the study made by Germane and Germane,² there was apparent agreement with Hartshorne and May, eminent psychologists of Yale University, who stated that 4-H Club work is one of the greatest character-building agencies in the United States, inasmuch as in meeting actual life situations on the farm and in the home, the school, or the community, it guides young people in making important and far-reaching decisions that give definite character training through the formation of good habits in thinking and acting. Germane and Germane pointed out in their 8-month study of

² MARTIN, T. T. BRIEF REPORT OF BOYS' AND GIRLS' 4-H CLUB WORK IN MISSOURI AND SOME RESEARCH STUDIES. Mo. Agr. Col. Ext. No. 538, 8 pp. 1936. [Mimeographed.]

the members of a typical Missouri 4-H baby-beef club, that the following positive character traits were developed:

1. Self-reliance, industry, and responsibility in doing their own work.
2. Initiative and creative thinking in planning work and meeting obstacles.
3. Thrift, judgment, honesty, and accuracy in buying and selling animals and in keeping records.
4. Patience, carefulness, vision, perseverance, and "stick-to-itiveness" in working on a long-time goal.
5. Cooperation and respect for others in showing one's own animals, in reaching club goals, and in seeing what others can do.

RELATIONSHIPS

4-H Club work emphasizes the home. In fact, 4-H Club work is home work. The practical work of the club—the demonstration—usually is done on the home farm or in the home of the club members. Often, club meetings are held in the home. This home work of the club member is of more importance than is commonly appreciated. There, at home, with a task in keeping with his ability, the club member has the best opportunity for growth and development. By trying new ways of doing practical things in his own home environment and checking results, he makes many improvements in well-established home-and-farm practices that win the approval of the entire family group and thus make for family solidarity.

Moreover, the work of 4-H Club members in the home develops common experiences that make the work of the club group more worth while, and any outstanding accomplishment in relation to the home is apt to bring a type of group approval not otherwise attained. In this connection, the club member who has the active interest and cooperation of parents naturally accomplishes more. This larger accomplishment not only helps to develop more capable young people at home but also sets standards for other members of the club. Club work may fail largely in its purpose when parents are not actively interested and cooperative (fig. 2).

4-H Club work has a definite relationship to the rural community, particularly through the general agricultural extension program. Not only are its activities woven into the very fiber of the community, but its leadership represents the best manhood and womanhood of each community. To an increasing extent rural young people are planning their own programs as an integral part of general community and county extension programs, and the problems involved in such programs are being recognized by young people in relation to their own 4-H programs. In this work local volunteer leaders are playing a large part. Just as the great leaders of history have dealt with the immediate and pressing problems of life, just as they, by word and act, have led men to a finer sense of their individual and corporate obligations, so do volunteer leaders of 4-H Clubs think in terms that will, in turn, develop rural youth and, through the solving of community problems, help these young people to realize their best possible selves and have as their own a finer and more wholesome philosophy of life. Experience has shown that rural youth are slow to follow any leader, however clever and adroit he may be, who lacks devotion and loyalty to deep moral principles and

spiritual ideals and fails to assume responsibility in community affairs. Experience has also shown that the local leader who is most successful is one who knows his community best, particularly in relation to its young people and their needs, interests, and possibilities.

In connection with this phase of 4-H Club work, Hartshorne and Pendry³ call attention to the fact that one of the fundamental reasons for the great value of 4-H Club work as a character-building program is that its activities are wholly integrated with the economic life of the community. In summarizing they state that the consciousness of his own importance and the importance of the 4-H activity in the welfare of the community lead the member to manifest those qualities of worth and integrity that make character.



FIGURE 2.—Club meetings are held in the home, and work is done either there or on the home farm.

GENERAL ORGANIZATION

All the 4-H Club work in a county is under the direction of a county extension agent: A club agent if the county has one; if not, the agricultural agent and the home demonstration agent, who assume joint responsibility. The county extension agent, under the general direction of the State extension office, supervises the organization of 4-H Clubs, guides the formulation of the club program for the year, supplies

³ PENDRY, ELIZABETH R., and HARTSHORNE, HUGH. ORGANIZATIONS FOR YOUTH: LEISURE TIME AND CHARACTER BUILDING PROCEDURES, 359 pp. New York and London. 1935. See pp. 78-79.

State and Federal bulletins, advises with members of the county 4-H Club council or committee and the local club leaders, conducts such gatherings as county 4-H camps, club picnics, round-ups, exhibits, fairs, and achievement days; that is, generally supervises club work in the county.

In addition to the local leaders, who are residents of the community and who assume responsibility for the work of each club, a county 4-H Club council or sponsoring committee is usually developed. Such a council or committee may be composed of local leaders, parents, experienced members, and others interested in the 4-H Club program, or it may be appointed by some sponsoring group such as a homemakers' club, a school, or some farm organization. Under the guidance of county extension agents, such county club councils or sponsoring committees are becoming increasingly important. They usually study the needs of the county, plan county 4-H activities, plan and carry on an improvement program for all local leaders, and perform other duties as situations change and needs arise.

Forms of organization for the local clubs vary in different States. In some States a club is composed of boys and girls doing only one kind of work, and in others the club is a community organization to which all boys and girls who are eligible may belong, and each may select the line of work most desired. A 4-H Club usually has a local club leader who is a resident of the community and assumes general responsibility for the work; club officers, such as a president, vice president, secretary, often a treasurer, a news reporter, and chairmen of various committees for which a need has been felt, such as program and social committees. Oftentimes these local groups may affiliate to form a community 4-H Club, which, in turn, meets regularly in connection with general club activities. The "standard club," believed by many leaders to be one of the most important mileposts in the development of 4-H Club work, has requirements that vary throughout the country, but in a number of States they are as follows:

1. Each club shall have a membership of at least five working on the same enterprise.
2. There shall be a local leader in charge during the club year.
3. There shall be a local club organization with necessary officers and with duties as prescribed in a club constitution.
4. There shall be a definite program of work for the year.
5. There shall be at least six regular club meetings during the year. The secretary shall be required to keep definite records of these meetings and also of the progress of each member.
6. A local exhibit shall be held annually by the club members.
7. There shall be a club demonstration team which must give at least one public demonstration in the home community.
8. At least 60 percent of the members must complete the farm or home demonstration and file a final report with the county or State club leader.
9. A judging team shall be chosen by the members.
10. An achievement-day program shall be held at the completion of the work.
11. The club shall hold membership in the county extension organization.
12. When the first four requirements have been met, a standard club charter is issued. When all the requirements have been met for any one year, a seal of achievement is awarded.

Thousands of such standard club groups have been organized, all of them doing definite farm and home demonstration work in keeping with the general extension program. They hold regular meetings, exchange experiences, and raise their own standards. The fact that

these clubs have increased in number each year reinforces the belief that 4-H young people, through their own community organization, are furnishing a potential force in community development which is doing much toward improving general farm and home conditions.

In organizing a homemaking or agricultural club, young people should be led to elect their own officers, appoint their own committees, and make up their own programs. Before the election takes place, an explanation of the duties of officers and their importance to the success of the club usually will lead the members to vote for those young people most able to do the work required. Officers and members of committees should be led to assume full responsibility. Training schools for them alone may be held. Equally important is practice in parliamentary procedure, which affords an excellent opportunity for the development of leadership and "followership" on the part of all. Throughout, the function of the adult leader is to study the members of the group carefully so that he may skillfully guide them to react in a constructive way to the different situations that may arise in the group. And especially, members should learn to be loyal to the group as a whole as well as to each individual upon whom responsibility has been placed.

Probably the most important phase of the 4-H Club organization is the regular meeting. It is held at stated intervals, at least once a month and often every 2 weeks. Most clubs follow a year-round program. Members conduct their meetings along parliamentary lines; carry out a program planned by them in advance, in which the progress of their respective activities is presented and difficulties are discussed; give demonstrations pertaining to their farm and homemaking activities; sing, play, and carry on other activities of interest to young people under the guidance of the local leader. Often the county extension agent also is present to advise with the leader and members and to assist with any problems that may arise.

Programs for 4-H Club meetings usually consist of three parts—business, demonstrations and discussions of project work, and social activities. To carry out such programs successfully members are soon interested in varied lines of work, all of which depend largely on their own voluntary efforts—club goals for the year to be determined; tours, hikes, picnics, Mother's Day, Father's Day, and other special events to be planned; invitations to people of the community and others skilled in the particular lines of homemaking or agricultural club work being carried on, to attend club meetings to discuss the work; reports to be made at the general community meetings; encouragement of other young people of the community to belong to the club; demonstration teams to be selected and trained; local, county, and State exhibits to be made; selection of delegates to the county and State encampments and short courses; and invitations to other clubs to attend meetings.

THE LOCAL VOLUNTEER LEADER

The local leader or club adviser is regarded as important to the whole 4-H program. This person usually is an outstanding man or woman of the community who is sufficiently interested in young people to be willing to spend some time in helping the members to plan their own program for the year; attend regular club meetings; train mem-

bers in various 4-H activities; visit the homes of members to see how their demonstrations are progressing; give advice and encouragement when needed; accompany members to club events outside the community; and assume responsibility in relation to members' general group activities.

To succeed with young people, the leader must be tolerant, patient, and sympathetic toward their shortcomings, and confident that, in time, they may be overcome. He or she must also be of the type that takes pleasure in helping other people (fig. 3). It is doubtful if anyone can become a really successful leader without this capacity for friendship, understanding, and faith. In this connection, it is essential that local leaders render praise when the work done warrants it. This approval, in turn, develops the interest, satisfaction, and self-confidence that are fundamental to maximum effort on the part of club members. Young people need much encouragement if their interest is to be maintained.



FIGURE 3.—The local 4-H Club leader gives help to each club member.

By tactful guidance, club members may be led to accept as their local leader some outstanding person selected by the county extension organization, or to vote, themselves, for a well-qualified person in the community to be their leader. However, before any such voting, it is desirable to explain carefully to members the qualifications of a local leader. Thereupon, certain adults of the community may be considered in relation to these qualifications and others that the group may think essential. After the voting, the club may go in a body to make known its wishes to a prospective leader. Few men and women can resist such an appeal from boys and girls. An increasing number of former club members are volunteering each year to serve as local leaders.

Any person selected to be a local leader should realize the importance of aiming to stay in the background while helping members to assume responsibility; studying members and providing situations that will afford them larger responsibilities as they develop in leadership and "followership"; recognizing work well done in such a way that the member will be encouraged to do even better; keeping ahead

of members of the club group yet seemingly always with them; and making friendly suggestions rather than displaying authority.

It is important that the local leader be conscious of the example he sets. Boys and girls in the teens are prone to make an ideal of an older person. The local leader is apt to be that person. Unfortunate is he, who, through carelessness of speech, deception, or evasion of responsibility, shatters that ideal. It is equally important, too, that the leader of a 4-H Club maintain a home based on relatively high standards.

Successful leadership in any work demands careful attention to plans for the future. The local leader must be constantly anticipating the next step to be taken by the group in any work under way, and preparing for it. Otherwise little may be accomplished. It is equally essential that the local leader carry club members forward to that step as the opportunity develops normally. To do this, he must appreciate their viewpoint. Probably the most commonly recognized qualification of any leader is the ability to carry the group along with him. This, in turn, involves a personality which makes others willing and glad to be led. That local leader governs most successfully who guides the group into making just decisions, regarding its own activities, independently. Fortunate is the leader who early learns to make constructive suggestions rather than to lay down the law. Every ostentatious display of authority lessens authority. Any group in 4-H Club work may be carefully guided to make just decisions if the leader places the responsibility upon its members, and leads them to look at all sides of the question before taking action. In such planned guidance the local leader, if well qualified, is an accepted member of the group (fig. 4), commanding at all times its respect, sharing in its pleasures and regular activities, providing situations whereby the members may develop initiative, and assuming leadership when occasion seems to warrant it.

BASIC PRINCIPLES OF PROCEDURE IN PROGRAM MAKING

DEVELOPMENT OF YOUNG PEOPLE, THE FIRST CONSIDERATION

In organizing young people in 4-H Club work, as well as in any other work, it is important for leaders to study constantly what will make for the best development of those involved. The test of any organization's value is the extent to which each individual in that organization is given opportunity to develop freely to the limit of his possibilities or capacities. That no one has a right to stimulate the interests of boys and girls in any line of work, if, in so doing, young people are thereby prevented from developing their best possible selves is becoming increasingly recognized. Moreover, the organization of 4-H Club work should be based on a sound understanding of the adolescent to the end that his inherent traits may be capitalized or redirected in proper keeping with his best interests and the objectives to be reached. In this connection the closely knit club organization performs a distinct function. The qualities essential to good citizenship, such as community leadership and cooperation, are stimulated, exercised, and often fully developed in such an organization.

DEVELOPMENT OF THE PROGRAM BY MEMBERS THEMSELVES

At the time country boys and girls meet to form a homemaking or agricultural club, they are told that they, as a group, may develop their own club program for the year. If there are 10 or more boys and girls, two or more groups may be formed. However, before any project choices are made, the attention of the whole group usually is focused by the adult leader on the general community extension program, and their active participation is enlisted to make their community a better place in which to live. Thereby are uncovered life situations involving issues affecting members' own interests, present and future, and those of their community as a whole. Thus, if these young people are interested in following some line of work included in the general extension program, such as improving the livestock of the community or beautifying the home and community grounds, three advantages follow:

1. The desire to serve their own community is awakened in keeping with its present recognized needs. When the issues seem highly important, maximum interest is enkindled in a natural, wholesome way. A sense of belonging is developed. Moreover, valuable contact with a larger group is realized insofar as community consciousness and a sense of community responsibility are developed.

2. Members can then take part at general community meetings in discussions and other activities pertaining to their own club work as it relates to the carrying out of the general community program in which their parents and neighbors also are intensely interested. In other words, a new, interesting partnership with their parents and neighbors is made possible.

3. A valuable experience may be gained through giving up some immediate interest for the larger one of trying to make the general home life of the community as fine as possible.

If, on the other hand, members are not interested in choosing as their major club activity a phase of the general community program,



FIGURE 4.—The local 4-H Club leader is an accepted member of the group.

they are permitted to take up any other phase of homemaking or agricultural work, provided the undertaking is economically sound for that community. If one or two of the young people of the group are not interested in the choice of the majority, they are permitted to pursue their individual interests, but as members of the group they are encouraged to take up the line of work selected by the majority, if it is practical for them to do so. At all times, the intent is to bring farm girls and boys into contact with the live problems of the community through representation on committees of leading men and women and members of the county extension staff who meet to consider community needs and interests and to formulate a county extension program. As 4-H Club members, rural boys and girls have a definite part in such programs through analyses of their own needs, and the making of simple home and community surveys. In 4-H food clubs, for instance, they keep a food-habits score card for several weeks and then formulate a program based on the preparation of foods found lacking in their diet. Thus rural youth, mingling in the full life of the community and, in turn, becoming conscious through its club program of the important things being striven for by the community, is brought into contact with the best type of civic education.

INCENTIVES

4-H Clubs are organized on a voluntary basis. Therefore interest is manifested at the start. However, local 4-H Club leaders and county extension agents probably will have in mind a much larger and richer program for members than the one that members may formulate as their own in the beginning. The responsibility of those in charge is to guide club members skillfully to want the more worthwhile things. From the outset, young people should be led to feel that the program is theirs and that they are responsible for its success. They should be led to question the different points of view that may arise and to take all factors into consideration before proceeding definitely in any one direction. Appealing to the desire of the large number of young people to make selections as well as to direct the things that most concern themselves, may develop a powerful incentive for work along homemaking or agricultural lines during a period of ready acceptance. Boys and girls in the teen age are likely to possess a certain love of freedom, and they delight in making choices.

In formulating their programs, young people should be made to feel that much is expected of them from the standpoint not only of their homemaking and agricultural activities, but also of their own behavior as related to all their club activities. For example, it is expected that 4-H Club members will repay their loans at the bank, that they will keep reliable records, and that they will be known for their honesty in the show ring. Every club member is expected to be humane not only to farm animals but also to wildlife encountered either in hunting or fishing. Leaders can skillfully get members to feel that their parents and neighbors are interested in their progress and expect them to make good and be upright and kind in their dealings. The establishment of 4-H Club goals has proved very successful not only in relation to the work of the club as a whole but

also in relation to the individual development of the members. For the goals chosen and attained in life largely determine success. There are many types of goal. The more specific the goal, the easier attainment will be. A few typical 4-H goals are:

1. To make my best better.
2. To be true at all times to the 4-H Club pledge.
3. To learn to preside well at business meetings; to complete an exhibit and display it; to take part in demonstration- and judging-team work; and to speak in public.
4. To be a helpful, intelligent member of my family, club, and community.
5. To follow willingly in some 4-H Club and community undertakings and to lead in others.
6. To encourage other boys and girls to enroll in a 4-H Club.
7. To be of assistance to others who may need help in their 4-H Club activities.
8. To be a good cooperator in all worthy undertakings.
9. To show good sportsmanship both in winning and in losing.
10. To obtain as much education as is possible through school, farm, and home activities so that I may be well prepared for my chosen life work.
11. To learn to appreciate the best in music, art, and literature.
12. To become acquainted with wildlife and the out-of-doors.
13. To be familiar with the advantages of living in the country.
14. To study the lives of fine, outstanding men and women of the past and present.
15. To link myself with those institutions that encourage the finer things of life, such as the church—the great inspirational force in the development of spiritual values.
16. To render service whenever there is an opportunity.

PURPOSEFUL ACTIVITIES

In order that club members may develop their native capacities and the 4-H program function effectively, the activities involved should be purposeful and stimulate wholehearted endeavor. In this connection, the leader should realize the importance of making appeals that will stimulate such endeavor. To do this effectively, here again it is necessary that he have a thorough understanding of the adolescent.

OPPORTUNITY TO LEARN TO DO BY DOING

A program that provides ample opportunity to "learn to do by doing" is considered particularly important to the success of 4-H Club work because of the limited follow-up work that usually can be done (fig. 5). From the beginning, the activities involved in any club program have been determined largely on this basis. That such a program is sound from an educational standpoint is borne out by all authorities, for it is believed that actually doing things is more conducive to learning than any other method of instruction.

OWNERSHIP TO STIMULATE AND MAINTAIN INTEREST AND DEVELOP A SENSE OF RESPONSIBILITY

Successful club work usually involves some ownership in the crop or livestock raised or some part in the work done within the home. Ownership often aids considerably in developing interest in the work and at the same time stimulates a wholesome sense of responsibility which, in turn, is essential to good citizenship. It is important also that such ownership be fully respected by both leaders and parents. Otherwise, discouragement along with failure to complete the work under way may follow.



FIGURE 5.—4-H Club members "learn to do by doing."

ACTIVE PARTICIPATION IN GENERAL COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES TO DEVELOP
COMMUNITY CONSCIOUSNESS

Young people are increasingly anxious to do as adults do, and, having attained a social viewpoint, they can engage in many community activities in much the same way as adults do. Such activities are real and may be highly important to young people if well presented. They will then challenge the member's best efforts and give him a definite feeling that he is part of the community. Moreover, boys and girls in the broad sense are citizens, and their interest in constructive community activities and sympathy with them should be aroused. They should be made to feel that all these activities are theirs and that they are a real factor in community development. Their cooperation, in many instances, is as important as that of adults. Among general community activities in which the interest of young people may be enlisted are the beautification of school grounds or roadsides, refurnishing of the town hall, improvement of grounds around the village railroad station, campaigning against injurious insects, the preparation of Thanksgiving-dinner baskets for distribution to the needy of the neighborhood, supervision of a community Christmas tree, or a campaign against unsportsmanlike conduct in community games and contests. All such activities involve much constructive participation—doing the thing themselves—exceedingly essential in training citizens.

INSTRUCTIONS SO SIMPLE AND DEFINITE THAT VOLUNTEER LEADERS ARE ABLE
TO FOLLOW EASILY

Adequate instruction is fundamental to any successful endeavor today. Other things being equal, that organization succeeds best which equips its workers best. Carrying out the programs of church, school, business, and other institutions depends largely on the instruction given to workers. Because follow-up work in connection with 4-H Club activities is limited, it is essential for local leaders to be well informed, so that they can adequately supervise the home and farm

work of members in the intervals between visits of workers employed by the Extension Service. Leadership in 4-H Club work involves instruction in farm and homemaking practices to be demonstrated, in methods of club organization, and in the development of constructive attitudes toward home and community life. The three main ways of offering systematic instruction to volunteer 4-H Club leaders are group conferences of leaders; personal interviews with individual leaders; and demonstrations at club meetings by the county agent to show the volunteer leaders how to carry on with club groups some phase of the program hitherto not quite understood.

CHALLENGING TASKS OR PROBLEMS TO SOLVE

Meeting live home and community problems does much to vitalize any community activity. In solving such problems the amount of theory given to a group of young people is largely dependent on the ability of the specialist to translate it into such clear language that it can be passed on easily in an intelligent and accurate way to the county agent or local club leader and, in turn, to young people. It is believed that theory can best be given after the desire for it has been created through a program of learning to do by doing.

During the early period of 4-H Club work, agents and local leaders were concerned primarily with giving information and with the acquisition of manual skill. As the work has become better understood, the principle of self-help has been grasped. Today the giving of accurate information embodying the best offerings of research and the acquisition of skill are still considered important; yet club leaders believe that far more important is the development of ability in the young homemaker or farmer to recognize a problem and seek its solution in a definite, direct way. Such development is provided through the organization of young people in 4-H Clubs on a voluntary basis, whereby they may meet to discuss and compare their work, to learn how to obtain information from authoritative sources, and, if necessary, to request and get the services of experts to help them in solving their own particular home problems (fig. 6).

FLEXIBLE REQUIREMENTS

The minimum requirements for the completion of any 4-H Club activity should be so flexible that the program, in turn, will be adapted to the ability, tendencies, and needs of rural young people of different age groups. The difficulty of providing flexible requirements in 4-H Club work conducted with a limited amount of supervision is recognized. However, according to studies made, the results from the work based on flexible requirements, when carefully planned, more than compensate for the effort expended. The more that young people plan their own club programs, the easier will it be for the local leader to guide them in setting up for themselves requirements for the completion of the work. The knowledge that they have done a good job will satisfy their own personal interests and needs and, at the same time, the job will justify recognition as a part of club work. If the work is so organized that choices may be made depending on the age, needs, and ability of the young people involved, maximum interest will be enkindled. This will enable the member to carry the project work

by himself until another contact is made with either a local leader or an extension agent.

PROGRESSIVE STEPS

“Growing activity” is especially important in this connection, not only in the maintenance of an abiding interest but also for the best development of the individual member. According to studies made, this plan of having the program based on progressive steps in relation to activities and years of work has proved the most satisfactory.

VARIED ACTIVITIES

In formulating any 4-H Club program, all possible resources should be utilized to develop a wide range of active interests and rich experiences such as will result in all-round growth of the individual. To provide rural young people with varied lines of activity seems especially important, inasmuch as they often are out of touch with many activities that should enlist their attention. Trips to different parts of the country and State to observe the home life of other people and to meet boys and girls in work and play are exceedingly valuable. Such activities deserve special attention: rural young people usually are limited in new ideas because of their resources, which are scant as compared with those of young people in more thickly populated centers. Then, too, these young people are part of that national group of home lovers who, because of their land consciousness, are apt to be conservative in attitude and have a tendency to resist change.

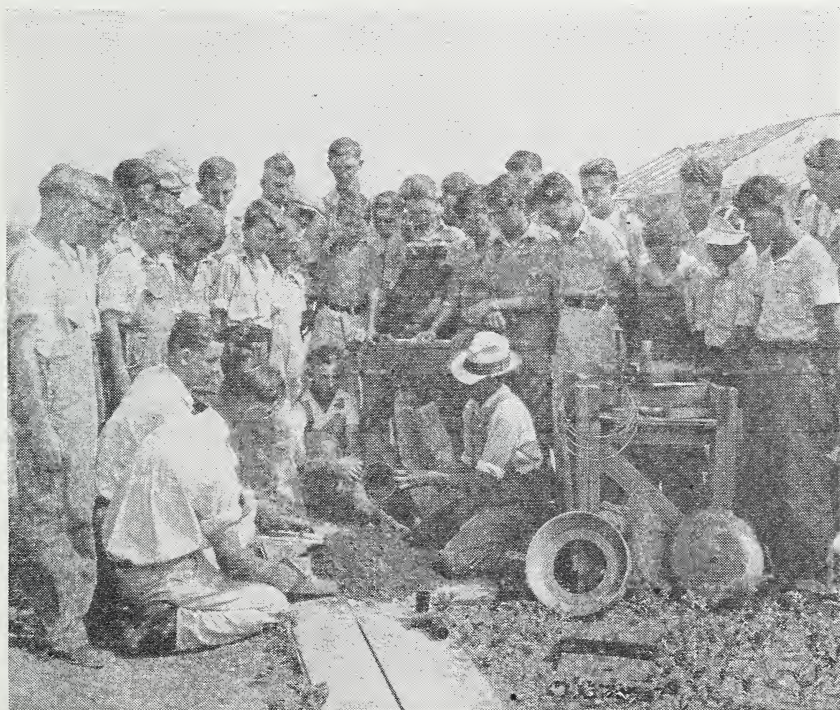


FIGURE 6.—4-H Club members cooperate in solving their own important problems.

Someone has said:

An adequate program presents an endless chain of fascinating and compelling activities which are not only interesting in the doing, but challenging to the imagination, and which are varied enough to satisfy every individual in the group. To be worthy from the angle of imagination, the program must contain large elements of color, picturesqueness, and romance.

ELEMENT OF NOVELTY

Each year's work in any 4-H Club activity should be so different in terminology, arrangement, and bearing, that it will, in effect, be a new activity. In other words, it must have the element of novelty which in turn challenges thought, stimulates interest, and usually results in renewed effort.

Studies of some young people's organizations show that the majority of members are content to remain in a given activity or project only a short time and to do mediocre work. This is to be expected, as during the adolescent period there is a strong craving for experience, which is only Nature's way of leading boys and girls to choose a vocation. This characteristic may lead boys and girls to change from one activity to another before accomplishing any desirable results. Therefore, if young people are to remain in a club activity long enough to gain the necessary self-confidence and satisfaction which come from doing one thing well and which, in turn, lead them on to do good work in other lines, it is important to have each phase of the work undertaken, particularly those phases that seem important enough to be continued, so varied that interest will be stimulated and maintained. By such procedure young people may be led to remain in an activity sufficiently long to acquire the habit of success.

FEELING OF SUCCESS

A feeling of success on the part of the individual will insure continued membership in the club group over a considerable period. Therefore, it is important that the club program be so planned that

each member can feel that he is succeeding. This means that the program must be developed on a progressive basis in keeping with the abilities of each member. It also means that the local leader should recognize work well done, perhaps seek at times to find something that can be approved so that the member, in turn, may gain that satisfaction which comes from the approbation of people who count. By such procedure,



FIGURE 7.—A feeling of success insures continued membership in the club group.

in time it is possible for each member to gain the habit of success and to arrive at that turning point in life where he realizes that he

can evaluate situations accurately. Then having decided to go ahead, he is justified in being confident that, with hard work, he will succeed (fig. 7).

DEVELOPMENT OF SOCIAL IDEALS

It is important in a democratic government that there be developed among young people constructive group action and group control. In this country young people should, as early as possible, gain the habit of acting in groups that function along democratic lines—learning to work with others, giving of their best thought to the making of group decisions, conquering selfish interest for the good of all and, finally, learning how to give in to the will of the majority.

GROUP PROGRAMS

In order that such group action and group control may be developed on a constructive, democratic basis, young people should be led as a group to formulate a program. Experience shows that they adhere to a program more effectively when they feel that it is their very own. Thereby genuine interest is enkindled, and they are stimulated to put forth their best efforts. Life is made up of choices. In 4-H Club work young people should be led as a group to make worthwhile choices through practice in choosing and in setting standards. In no instance should a club program be superimposed, for then young people may become callous to the autocratic rule of the few.

VITAL ISSUES

Today much is said concerning the discussion method. This method, to be successful, requires that action of the group be centered on vital issues—issues that stimulate a response on the part of each member and make for the interplay of minds. Thereby facts will be brought out and information sought in the adjustments desired. It is only when ideas seem vital and sounder conclusions, in turn, are reached that constructive group discussion has taken place (fig. 8).

CONTACTS WITH OTHER GROUPS

In the development of democratic group action, contacts with other groups in many and varied ways are essential. Furthermore, any organization may be measured from the standpoint of its effectiveness in developing young people by the degree to which it increases the number, variety, and kind of shared interests. Many opportunities have been provided for boys and girls engaged in 4-H Club work to come in contact with other groups of the community, county, and State. Learning to make contacts with outstanding men and women of the community in positions concerned with the public welfare is emphasized as an important step in learning to serve one's own community effectively. Interstate and national club events are provided, to which farm boys and girls are sent as delegates. Some trips to foreign countries for club boys and girls also have been provided. Those who have been awarded such trips have met the young people of distant places on a friendly basis, and a beneficial interchange of ideas has been the result.

SHARING RESPONSIBILITY

Each member of the group should be guided in assuming his share of responsibility and in conquering self-interest, particularly when the good of the group is concerned. If club members can be made to realize that they as individuals must see certain things through or the group will suffer, the first step in self-conquest has been made successfully. The good of the group should be the paramount thought. It is important in club work that each member be made to feel that some work belongs to him to do, that a certain kind of conduct is expected of him, that a certain contribution to the general good of the club is demanded of him, and that the group is depending on him. If a responsibility is placed on a member, that member should be held accountable not to the local leader or agent but to the other members of the club and should face their disapproval if he fails. Thus the ideals of social responsibility may be inculcated. Members in 4-H Club work should be guided one step farther—to see that the common good of the group really makes for the best good of the individual member. Thereby genuine cooperation is developed in which each member becomes interested in the group's success. This mutual interest, in turn, develops a sympathetic attitude among members for one another (fig. 9).

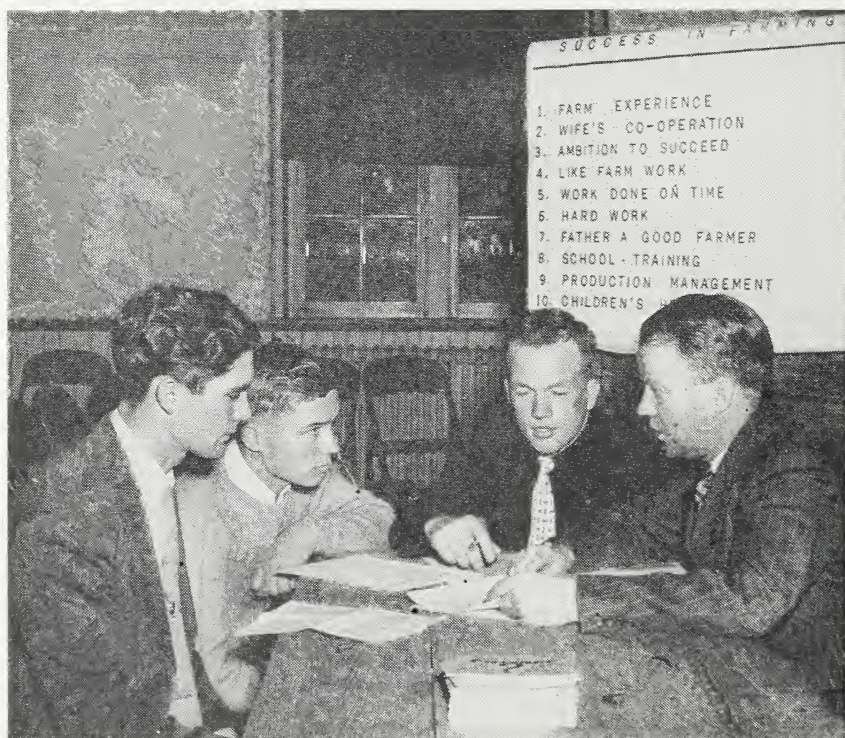


FIGURE 8.—4-H Club members concentrate on issues that seem vital to them.

RESPECT FOR THE LAWS OF THE MAJORITY

4-H Club members are led early, in connection with their business meetings, to respect the laws or rules of the majority in any voting that may take place. In this relation it is particularly important for the local leader to guide members to realize, before the voting, that they should agree first to follow the decision of the majority, whatever that decision may be.

GOOD FELLOWSHIP

Good fellowship is essential to group unity. There must be an esprit de corps. The friendlier the attitude of members toward one another, the more successful will be their group undertakings. The local leader should guide members to recognize that all cannot be captains, but that everyone can be a leader in some activities and a follower in others. When members of the club are fully conscious of this principle, unhappy distinctions will gradually disappear, and everyone will gladly pay honor to work well done.

DEVELOPMENT OF LEADERSHIP WITHIN THE GROUP

The club should be so organized that leadership, at least along one line, may be developed on the part of all its members. For it is important, particularly in rural America, that 4-H Club members be educated to lead as well as to obey. Young people should gain the power of self-direction and of directing others—administration, and the ability to assume positions of responsibility.

OPPORTUNITY TO ASSUME RESPONSIBILITY

Leadership develops as opportunity to assume responsibility is provided. The value of the person in charge depends largely on what he gets others to do. Every member of a 4-H Club should be given responsibility: some members are able to assume more than others. Opportunity in this regard may be provided through the work assigned to club officers and to committees appointed for the year, or for single events such as club tours to see various phases of home-making or agricultural club work. Games, songs, club pageants, and festivals also afford ample opportunity for the assumption of responsibility, and, in turn, the development of leadership. Moreover, as young people learn to serve by assuming responsibility in home and community upbuilding, so will they become intelligent leaders in their own community. The more they learn to give up for the common good, the more will they learn the true meaning of service (fig. 10). In this connection James E. Russell once said, "If this world is to become a better place to live in and life made better worth living, we must accept the Christian doctrine that service is the only criterion of greatness." In addition, it is believed that only by providing 4-H Club members with many opportunities to assume responsibility and to serve, will they, in turn, reach their highest development in leadership.

In any 4-H Club work, centering the attention of young people on community affairs is desirable especially when these affairs affect the home and the home farm in connection with the general community extension program. The part young people can play in improving conditions often can be emphasized to advantage. In such effort they have another opportunity to work side by side with their parents and neighbors. They learn to recognize and to meet local needs under varying circumstances and thereby gain valuable experience as young citizens. It is becoming common for 4-H Clubs to elect one of their members as a delegate to general extension meetings and other farmers' and young people's meetings, where he reports what the club has done toward carrying out the community program in homemaking or agricultural work. It is part of his responsibility, in addition, to take back to his own club group a report of these meetings and his observations, especially those regarding home life, made en route. By such means, if enough provision is made for exercise in assuming responsibility, young people may be kept in touch with the best in home and farm life and may develop a true sense of civic responsibility and genuine leadership in making their community a better place in which to live.

OPPORTUNITY FOR GROWTH

Leadership develops as opportunity for growth is provided. It is not sufficient that opportunity be provided for members to assume responsibility. Each opportunity improved should be followed by one calling for added responsibility, so that a normal healthy growth in leadership can develop. To carry out this principle requires constant vigilance and resourcefulness on the part of the local leader. Development of leadership in young people must be studied, stimulated, and directed carefully. In some States, 4-H Club captains are appointed to lead the members of their respective groups in one particular line of work; in others, members who have done especially good work may be appointed as assistant leaders to help younger members. Usually the adult leader is able to give the younger boys and girls responsibility for only part of the work. With the older boys and girls in the latter half of the teen age, the adult leader is wise who acts in the capacity of an adviser and allows these club members to assume the major responsibility. However, the successful leader develops a feeling on the part of members of the group, irrespective of age, that the club and the program are theirs, and that they are making the decisions as to what shall be done.

OPPORTUNITY TO DO ONE THING WELL

The joy and satisfaction that come from doing one thing well are essential to the development of any form of leadership (fig. 11). No one enjoys a task he knows he does poorly. The majority of boys and girls who drop out of school do so because they are failing. In 4-H Club work the same principle holds. These young people, to be happy and to develop as leaders, should be given one task at a time in keeping with their ability but challenging it. As each task is conquered, joy and satisfaction automatically are the reward. Eagerness to go forward naturally follows. The habit of success is formed and a sense of



FIGURE 9.—Each 4-H Club member is interested in the success of the group.

self-expression is realized that is quite as important as the development of leadership itself. In many instances one of the causes of discontent among rural people is the fact that life is found empty as far as adequate self-expression is concerned. What rural people usually crave is opportunity to do something worth while.

GENERAL 4-H CLUB ACTIVITIES

To stimulate and maintain interest, to raise standards of work, and to attain the all-round development of rural young people, many general club activities have been introduced into the 4-H Club program. Among them are demonstration and judging-team work, special 4-H Club days, work in music appreciation and dramatics, tours and hikes, 4-H camps, special club ceremonies, and 4-H Club exhibits at community, county, State, and often interstate, events.

TEAM DEMONSTRATIONS

The team demonstration is an important part of 4-H Club work, and its value to the club member is worthy of first consideration. This work gives young people an added incentive to develop skill. It gives them confidence in themselves so that they are able to make an explanation or plead a cause in a clear, telling manner. It develops initiative and inspires interest. Team-demonstration work by members is one of the best ways of interesting adults in club work, as many people see only the exhibit and the demonstration. Adults often are drawn to public demonstrations because of the boys and girls concerned, but usually go away with some idea of the work accomplished and as exponents of the practice taught. In this way, boys and girls, through organized club effort, become a powerful factor in carrying out the community program of work and spreading the influence of the demonstration in the home community. Team-demonstration work also encourages club spirit and cooperation. The

county extension agent always is ready to assist local leaders in training demonstration teams. He often furnishes them with suggestive outlines to follow. Such demonstration outlines may be obtained also from the office of the State club leader.

WORK IN JUDGING

Judging the finished products of the demonstration under way is an important part of the work of every club in raising work standards. 4-H members are taught to determine how nearly the objects judged meet a standard as set up in score cards, such as judging jars of fruits or vegetables canned, or garments made. At the completion of each piece of work, the club members judge the finished products. In this way attention is focused on the phases of the work that need strengthening. Thus judging plays an important part in setting and maintaining high standards. In livestock- and crop-club activities judging also plays an important part in learning to select livestock or seed for the farm. Such knowledge proves most profitable.

SPECIAL 4-H CLUB DAYS

In some States there is an annual 4-H Planning Day, when the club members of a county plan their program for the year. In this way, the attention of the whole county is focused on 4-H Club work, and members in turn recognize anew its importance and the seriousness of planning a sound program of activities.

Club festivals and events such as picnics and field days also increase interest in club work and are considered socializing factors in community development. Much of the success of such gatherings depends on the resourcefulness of leaders. The dates for any of these events usually are decided well in advance; transportation is arranged; a program of games, contests, club songs, short talks, and lunch is planned; provisions are made for inclement weather; and the assistance of a number of adults is enlisted in directing the activities. It is important to the success of such an event that every minute of time be filled and that it end promptly at a stated hour with a good send-off.

DRAMATICS, PAGEANTS, AND MUSIC

Each year, in many State programs, dramatics have an important place. State tournaments in dramatics are increasing. Simple plays based on agricultural and homemaking practices, as well as plays of other types, are being worked out by club members themselves, who select their own parts. In this way, rural young people are afforded another opportunity to express their own innermost desires and interests in a challenging, creative way.

If well-conducted, pageants arouse enthusiasm among club members, encourage creative thinking, and kindle the interest of intelligent men and women of the community. Those that have proved most successful have been developed around one central idea. The experienced leader plans the details of the pageant carefully as to desirable location, where it can be seen by the most people; equipment; making of signs; costumes; trucks and other conveyances. Such a leader has enough assistance so that he can confine his attention wholly to the direction of the work.

In nearly every State some work in music appreciation is part of the 4-H Club program. Through 4-H Club choruses, bands, and orchestras, the members are given an opportunity to develop a genuine appreciation of good music.

TOURS AND NATURE HIKES

For a considerable time 4-H Club tours have had an important place in the club program. By means of tours members are able to observe each other's work and gain helpful ideas. Tours also are made, usually within the county, to observe particularly good farming or homemaking practices. Educational trips to more distant points are made as a reward for outstanding work and as a means of broadening the outlook of rural young people.

Through 4-H nature-club hikes rural young people are developing, as never before, an appreciation of their own surroundings and of country life in general. They are learning to love birds and animals and to understand their connection with agriculture. Moreover, the eyes of these rural young people are being opened to the wealth of beauty in wild flowers, trees, and shrubs of their own areas, and their interest in these things is being stimulated. From these club hikes many other activities related to the conservation of wildlife are being developed.

CAMPS

4-H Club camps emphasize cooperation, stimulate renewed interest in club activities, give opportunity for special training in subject matter, and train in recreation. They also give opportunity for health work, not only through outdoor sports and supervised recreation but through training in health habits. But perhaps most important of all, these camps broaden the horizons of rural young people and give them a glimpse of the things in rural life difficult to obtain through regular 4-H Club work. The council circles, campfires, vespers, nature trails, and particularly, the candle-lighting ceremony at the close of each camp, do much to bring to club members a sense of the great human values—the intangibles—and enable each of them to return home with higher ideals and loftier purposes.



FIGURE 10.—4-H Club members share their club products with the less fortunate.

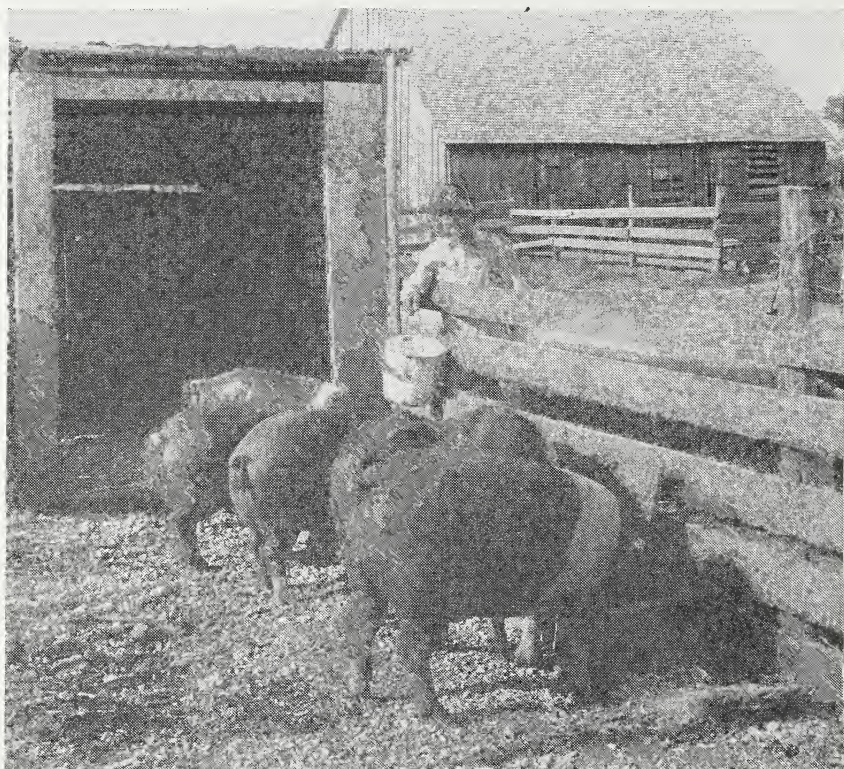


FIGURE 11.—Satisfaction comes from doing each thing well.

Only the finest, the most inspirational activities are encouraged. Leaders seek to select songs that inspire, stories with fun and action that elevate, and activities that present situations which will develop those attitudes that make for right living. C. B. Smith,⁴ in pointing out this emphasis in 4-H Club work, states:

We are glad to see increasingly coming into club work a quality of spirituality that is worth while. In a recent camp, following a day of rich experiences, the whole group climbed to the top of a commanding hill for a sunset hour. To sit on a hilltop with others in silence and meditation as the sun goes down and the evening shadows lengthen, to think together on things clean and worthy, to direct the mind away from material to more spiritual things, to commune with the soul—all are cultured things that help lift the mind up into the realm of the Creator and constitute a steadying worth-while influence in the midst of a very busy and often jazzy world. 4-H Club work may well include something of these spiritual matters that seek to develop the best in man.

Practically all 4-H Club members can attend camp. Some counties or groups of counties own permanent camp sites, and others set up temporary camps in some favored spot. In several States, 4-H conservation camps have been held in which observation of wildlife has been emphasized.

The National 4-H Club Camp is held in Washington to enable representative rural young people from each State to become better acquainted with the research work of the United States Department of

⁴ SMITH, C. B. THE FUTURE OF 4-H CLUB WORK. Paper presented at the Virginia Extension Conference, January 12, 1933. [Unpublished.]

Agriculture and the service that it renders; to give them an opportunity to study their Federal Government at first hand; and to make it possible for these leading young people to discuss suggestions for increasing the scope of extension work with girls and boys throughout the country. Every club delegate to the National 4-H Camp leaves Washington with a deeper appreciation of his own United States of America and what a salute to his flag really means (fig. 12).

EXHIBITS

An exhibit is one of the requirements of a standard club and of the work of a club member. The club exhibit visualizes the accumulated results of the club's work and gives an opportunity for comparison and improvement as well as for new ideas. Recent exhibits of hobbies have done much to broaden the field of activity of rural young people.

Plans to arrange an exhibit give added incentive to club members to excel in their work. Young people enjoy having their work displayed. Exhibits, therefore, add to their pleasure in 4-H Club work. Directions and suggestions for preparing exhibits in a pleasing and practical way may be obtained from the county extension agent. Club members may exhibit their work at club meetings for the purpose of having its quality judged and making ready for the final exhibit at the community, county, or State fair. The club exhibit is a display of the club demonstration.

4-H CLUB EVENTS AT STATE AGRICULTURAL COLLEGES

Nearly every State agricultural college gives outstanding 4-H Club members the opportunity of staying from 3 days to 2 weeks each year at the college. They are given instruction in farm and home work by the college faculty and the extension service personnel. The delightful experience of living on the college campus, usually in the college dormitories, and of getting acquainted with their own State college is afforded these young people. In this way new friendships are formed, viewpoints are broadened, helpful ideas are gained, and contacts with worth-while men and women are made.

SPECIAL CEREMONIES

Several ceremonies have been introduced in 4-H Club work that have proved successful in emphasizing the finer things of life. In some States, when young people join a club, an initiation takes place. This ceremony emphasizes the ideals of the club program and the responsibility to be assumed by members.

Another ceremony, conducted in connection with the installation of club officers after their election, calls attention to the duties of these newly elected officers and the responsibilities involved.

During special 4-H events, an impressive 4-H citizenship ceremony, as well as a 4-H candlelighting ceremony, is often held. Both of these ceremonies emphasize high ideals of home and community life that should be constantly in the minds of all 4-H members.

The 4-H achievement-day meeting is the crowning event of the club year. It emphasizes the importance of work well done; affords a splendid means of giving recognition to club members and those who

have aided club programs; provides an opportunity to extend the influence of the demonstration conducted and to obtain for it endorsement by prominent people. At this meeting plans are made for the future work of the club. Such a meeting usually includes short addresses by leading men and women of the community, demonstrations and reports by club members, club songs, the presentation of awards to members completing the work, and display of exhibits. Plans for the future, based on present achievements of the club, are often emphasized. A 4-H achievement day is especially important in that it places a premium on completed work.

SUMMARY OF CHARACTER-BUILDING METHODS IN 4-H CLUB WORK.

4-H Club work is based not only on the needs and interests of 4-H Club members but on the needs of the agricultural community to which they belong. Members are led to feel that they have a useful part of the world's work to do and that, in doing it, they may grow mentally, socially, and spiritually; that they, as an integral part of the community or county extension organization, have a definite responsibility in improving their community and in making it finer in every way. Through club work countless communities have been materially improved. It is the common thing for 4-H Clubs as part of their program of work, in addition to their farm and homemaking activities, to plant shrubbery and flowers about local schoolyards and town halls and along roadsides; produce and sell disease-free seed at reasonable prices; make children's clothing for needy families; provide hot lunches for local schools; help to promote county-wide soil and livestock campaigns; show consideration for animal life on the farm; improve the quality of crop and livestock raised; establish community and county 4-H Club fairs; build cottages for club camps; improve the quality of homemaking and agricultural practices prevalent in the community; and develop good, wholesome dramatics as well as other recreation for community programs. Of course, many of these activities are in addition to the ones that obtain in relation to the improvement of club members themselves.

Not every 4-H Club undertaking is a financial success, naturally, but unless some unavoidable calamity occurs, such as flood, fire, epidemic, or an extreme market situation, the club member usually realizes financial profit from the enterprise, particularly if that enterprise relates to farming practices. Such profit gives the member a new sense of what he can do through his own effort. Often self-confidence is developed in an outstanding way through facing facts squarely. Through this phase of club work, also, many club members are led to have bank accounts, to increase the size of their livestock project, to start a go-to-college fund, or to go into partnership with their parents in some farming or homemaking enterprise.

Thus 4-H Club work brings parents and young people together through a common interest making for family solidarity (fig. 13). Members come in contact with their leaders, who know how to do things, with the work of one another, which frequently involves acquiring added interesting information, and with the public through field meetings and exhibits at fairs, festivals, and demonstrations. From time to time they meet with the research and teaching staffs of



FIGURE 12.—Every club delegate leaves Washington with a deeper appreciation of what a salute to his own flag really means.

the State agricultural colleges and the United States Department of Agriculture, with businessmen and outstanding farmers, all leaders in different lines of work—men and women of achievement, who inspire by their accomplishments and outlook. Club members often are given a larger view of life, also, through opportunity to attend 4-H camps and short courses conducted by the State college of agriculture once or twice a year at the agricultural college itself. Also, several national events for 4-H Club members are held annually, culminating with the National 4-H Club Camp at the Nation's Capital. All these various meetings serve to awaken farm youth and to stimulate in them the desire to do and to attain.

The 4-H Club program for farm boys and girls is constantly being enriched. Recreation in the form of nature study is becoming particularly popular. Interesting nature trails are being worked out, thereby developing a genuine appreciation of surroundings as well as training in observation. Conservation of natural resources, particularly of wildlife, continues to be given greater emphasis. Water sports, games, and hobbies have an important place, especially at 4-H Club camps. Training in proper food and health habits and exercise for good posture are part of every 4-H Club program. Other features of the program include music and art appreciation, opportunity for thinking in terms of a life plan and the great human values, training in the common courtesies of life, and service of members to their respective club groups, as well as activities, such as the beautification of the farm home, to develop those appreciations and attitudes that make for a happily shared, progressive home life.



FIGURE 13.—Interest and cooperation of parents in 4-H Club activities contribute to family solidarity.

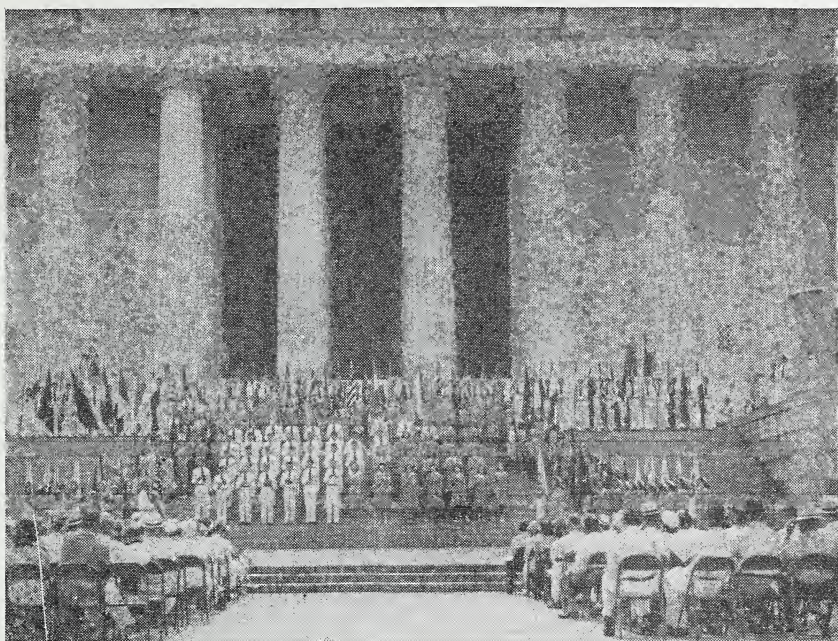


FIGURE 14.—Through 4-H Club activities members become aware of their own potential abilities.

Integrity is cherished in all club affairs. In 4-H Club work, rarely, if ever, does a club boy or girl fail to meet an obligation at the bank from which money has been borrowed. This fact should be of particular interest, inasmuch as a large amount of money is lent each year for livestock and crop work and for other 4-H activities. Through supervised contests, sportsmanship has been developed in an outstanding way, as observed in critical club situations, and leaders through club meetings are constantly guiding members to yield happily to the will of the majority. Outstanding cases of unselfishness as well as a keen sense of responsibility are often observed (fig. 14).

Perhaps the most outstanding results of 4-H Club work are those concerned with attitude building, which in turn leads to constructive effort. Surprising accomplishments have been observed by leaders after young people have developed those ideals that make for progressive rural leadership, which are symbolized by the 4-H emblem and expressed by the pledge (fig. 15). Among such ideals the most noticeable have been those bringing about effective service in the home, on the home farm, and in the home community, that often have led to the visible improvement of the whole community. Other results include development of an enriched outlook and more far-reaching vision on the part of farm youth; increasingly recognized ability of 4-H Club young people to organize as well as to cooperate in home and community undertakings; development of a health consciousness and standard, not only on the part of rural boys and girls but also on the

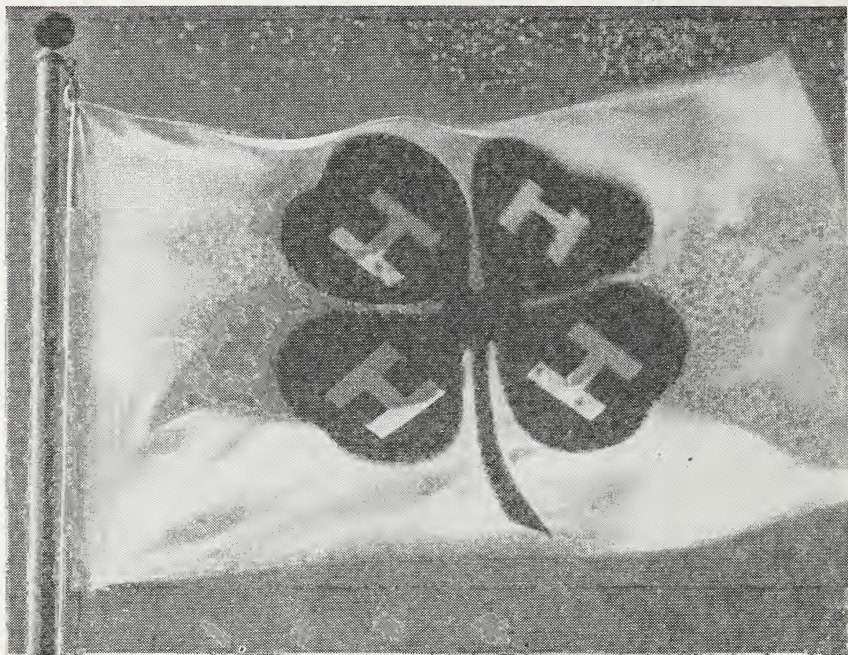


FIGURE 15.—I pledge {
My Head to clearer thinking.
My Heart to greater loyalty.
My Hands to larger service, and
My Health to better living, for
My Club, my Community, and my Country.

part of many rural communities as a whole; economic independence for many rural young people and their families; advantages of further education and travel; acquaintance with sources of accurate information in agriculture and home economics; and worth-while friendships with outstanding men and women of the community and State.

